

From: Leo Kreymborg
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/20/02 2:18pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I would like to voice my great disappointment at the proposed settlement with Microsoft Corporation. This settlement has no potential for reversing the suffocating control that Microsoft has over end users and software developers.

It used to be just a few short years ago that users had some choice when it came to applications. WordPerfect, for example, formally the preeminent word processor, was destroyed by Microsoft predatory practices. After almost eliminating WordPerfect from the marketplace, Microsoft finished the job by buying 25% of Corel, the publishers of WordPerfect. It is no surprise that WordPerfect for Unix platforms has since been discontinued. Time after time, Microsoft has destroyed competing companies by hiding the details of the operating system from them, bundling software, purchasing competitor's companies, and many other practices designed to eliminate the competition.

Microsoft's latest moves to force registration of its software and operating system, compel business users into operating system upgrades, and its moves toward yearly licensing fees are typical monopolistic practices: once the competition has been eliminated and the customers have no choice, compel them to pay more for your product.

Microsoft has monopolized the operating systems, all the popular applications, and the internet browser. It is further extending its stranglehold on the computer industry by licensing one of its proprietary programming languages, Visual Basic, for use in unrelated 3rd party applications. 3rd party developers, not wishing to be left without good connectivity to Microsoft Windows, are coerced to license Visual Basic for use in their applications. Microsoft thereby extends its reach and control over the industry it yet another way.

It am quite saddened that this proposed settlement has no potential for remedying this situation. Except for a valiant few who use Linux and other alternatives, that vast majority of businesses, individuals,

developers, and government agencies are essentially forced to use the myriad array of Microsoft products. The entanglement of the operating system, the software, the browser, and the programming languages make disconnecting any one of them difficult, and makes switching all of them almost impossible for most users.

Microsoft is a monopolistic predator whose practices are destroying innovation, and essentially extorting billions of dollars annually from users and government agencies. I implore you not to permit this settlement to go forward, and to take forceful action against Microsoft on behalf of the American people.

Leo Kreymborg
San Diego, California
atomicage@yahoo.com

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